

THE STEWARDSHIP PAPERS

Child's Play

When I was young I used to dream
Of how my life would be when I was grown;
No role was too extreme.

A prince, a wife, a doctor, an Indian...even a bear. In the beginning, it was all a game of the mind; but as I grew older, I would surround myself with the paraphernalia that would enhance whatever fantasy I was working on at the moment. The more "trappings," the more "real" the fantasy: If I was a "mother," I had a doll...and a blanket to wrap the baby in; if I was a "queen," I wore a make-shift crown; and "playing store" involved using whatever wasn't nailed down in the kitchen.

I would say, think, and act in whatever way I thought the particular character should behave. A world of fantasy, not always true to life, but as accurate as I could make it, given the information I had in my head at the time. After all, I was a child, and make-believe is a part of growing up.

But, now that I'm older?...

I say, think, and act the part of whatever I have chosen me to be...surrounded by more "trappings," these days; but instead of many characters, I've narrowed it

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down to a relative few. And, like the child, I sometimes forget that this is only temporary and isn't what life is all about. The "real world" is yet to come and preparing for it is as much a part of growing up, now, as it was back then.

I was talking to a friend, today, and somewhat jokingly, likened "life" to Halloween...a bunch of children playing parts. But she reminded me of something I'd forgotten: that, if it's true, then "the day after Halloween is All Saint's Day."

Fantasy is as real as we choose to make it; but, perhaps, if the fantasy isn't taken too seriously (to the point where only it seems real), then after the fantasy...or even in the midst of it, when least expected...comes Life.

(Halloween Week 1980)